



To: All IHCD Partners

Notice: MFD-08-18

From: IHCD Multi Family Department

Date: September 29, 2008

Re: **Fire Safety Week**

Fire Prevention Week is October 5th thru the 11th this year, and yes it is time to change the batteries in your smoke detectors again. Working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in reported home structure fires in half.

A 2004 U.S. telephone survey found that 96% of U.S. households had at least one smoke alarm, yet in 2000-2004, no smoke alarms were present or none operated in almost half (46%) of the reported home fires. An estimated 890 lives could be saved each year if all homes had working smoke alarms. 65% of reported home fire deaths in 2000-2004 resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms. The fire death rate in homes with working smoke alarms is 51% less than the rate for homes without this protection. In one out of every five homes equipped with at least one smoke alarm installed, not a single one was working.

When smoke alarms fail it is most often because of missing, disconnected or dead batteries. Nuisance activations were the leading cause of disabled smoke alarms. Smoke detectors should be replaced after a 10-year service, as the sensors are no longer effective after 10-years, and for smokers who smoke in their home, the service life is shortened and detectors should be replaced much sooner than 10-years

In Indiana it is against the law to disable or tamper with smoke detectors except when necessary for maintenance purposes. Smoke Detector Violations include the possibility of being charged with a Class A, B, or C infraction, or a Class D Felony. Reference Indiana Code IC 22-11-18-5. Smoke Detector Violations are indeed a serious offense. Smoke Detectors do save lives and Indiana Laws require them to be in place, operational, and maintained.

Please change those smoke detector batteries and enjoy peace of mind that you have raised the level of safety in your home for another year.

